



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

Wednesday, July 16, 2008

***ENZI APPLAUDS SENATE APPROVAL
OF GLOBAL AIDS RELIEF BILL***

***SAYS PEPFAR RENEWAL WILL SAVE LIVES
BY IMPROVING FOCUS ON TREATING INDIVIDUALS WITH HIV/AIDS***

Washington D.C. – The Senate today voted to renew the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), ensuring the resources to improve the program’s focus on treating individuals with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and save lives in countries devastated by poverty and disease, said U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee).

“This bill will secure America’s place as the world’s leader in the global fight against HIV/AIDS. This is proof that the United States continues to put its money where its mouth is to combat these terrible diseases,” Enzi said.

“This legislation will build upon the remarkable success of PEPFAR. Our bill establishes new, more challenging treatment goals to ensure that we treat the greatest number of people in the most cost effective manner possible. Providing medical care for individuals with HIV/AIDS must remain the number one priority of our global HIV/AIDS program.”

The Senate approved the bill (the “Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008,” H.R. 5501), by an 80-16 vote.

“When I traveled to Africa in March, I saw firsthand the value of the President's global AIDS policy,” Enzi said. “We have accomplished things that many thought were impossible from when I first visited the continent five years ago. It is truly one of the most successful foreign aid programs in the history of the United States.

“Now is the time to help PEPFAR make the transition from an emergency aid plan to a sustainable, long range effort that will continue to be effective until these diseases are relegated to the history books.”

Enzi said the Senate compromise bill will:

- Ensure that funding follows patients, and does not get wasted on excessive or unnecessary administrative costs;
- Continue the focus on treatment by requiring that more than half of the funds be used for treatment;
- Provide for a complete accounting of all funds provided to the Global Fund;
- Maintain a balanced, comprehensive approach to prevention by securing funds for the Abstinence and Be Faithful programs;
- Increase the capacity of the health care systems in countries receiving support;
- Ensure that all drugs used for the program are safe and effective;
- Develop a framework for the long-range stability of global AIDS programs; and,
- Encourage countries receiving assistance to develop their own independent and sustainable programs to address the health care needs of their people.

“We’ve succeeded in passing life-changing legislation because Senator Joe Biden (D-DE) and Senator Dick Lugar (R-IN) spent long days and nights working on it to ensure that it reflects the priorities of members on both sides of the aisle,” Enzi said. “Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK), and I worked closely with Senators Biden and Lugar to address important principles and goals in this legislation. I commend each member for their dedication and hard work on this critical issue.”

####